

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MINUTES

The Human Rights Commission met on Tuesday, April 16, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room at the Kandiyohi County Historical Society.

Members present were: Shelly Huseby, Shawn Mueske, Barbara Little, Jill Benson, Marlin Breems, Hamdi Kosar, Nate Erickson, Ben Larson and Lilbon Clark.

Item No. 1 Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Shelly Huseby at 5:00 p.m.

Item No. 2 Approve Minutes of Meeting

Chair Huseby presented the minutes of the March 19, 2019 meeting for discussion. Commission Member Breems moved to approve the Human Rights Commission minutes of March 19, 2019 and Commission Member Larson seconded the motion, which carried.

Item No. 3 Public Comment

There were no members of the public in attendance who wished to comment.

Item No. 4 Additions to the Agenda:

Chair Huseby noted the League of Women Voters would like to come to a future meeting to discuss the equal rights amendment and some training they have received. Commissioner Little brought forward a human rights violation situation from one of her patients relating to some discrimination and threats of eviction if someone who is gay had their partner move in then there was a person who was transgender who was being harassed when trying to obtain a renters' rebate and the landlord processing the paperwork put it in the pre-transgender name and the name change had gone through. This individual took it to the County and the issue was resolved. Commissioner Little gave the individual the contact information for the State Human Rights Commission in case they wanted to pursue the matter.

The Human Rights Commission section and links on the City's website were discussed and the possibility of how to submit a complaint through is site. The Commission would like the site to link to various other site to include housing information on the Housing and Redevelopment Authority website, landlord and tenant rights and the State Human Rights Commission. Commissioner Mueske will work with the City to develop this site.

Item No. 5 GARE Work Update – Willmar Global Statement

The City's subcommittee group has met twice in the last two weeks to work on the Racial Equity Vision Statement and three GARE assignments i.e. history of Willmar, ways that government in Willmar contributed to both racial equity and inequity, and components of a vision to come up with a Racial Equity Statement to then present to the City Council for adoption.

The Commission discussed the racial equity statement in depth to develop their vision statement to present in the future. After lengthy discussion, the global racial equity statement was developed to read as follows:

A healthy Willmar is an equitable, inclusive community, where everyone is empowered, valued and treated with dignity.

Chair Huseby read some of the items the group came up with for ways Willmar's government contributed to racial inequity as Elm Lane, when East African refugees first came they had no place to pray and were sent to the Armory, angst with the Westwind development and continued renter/landlord issues.

Also touched on were the ways Willmar contributed to racial equity as being the many cultural celebrations that take place through the year, the African Development Center, WAMA and the citizenship ceremony. The next meeting will be Thursday, April 25th from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. in Redwood Falls.

Item No. 6 Other Business

Chair Huseby relayed she was approached by Suzanne Napgezek from the League of Woman Voters regarding a video and training regarding the equal rights amendment and would like to come to a future meeting to present a short video for the Commission to review and discuss. This may take place in June.

Discussion was held in relation to co-partnering with the Diversity Committee at Ridgewater to reach out to college students to meet their needs and provide ways we can potentially help if they have issues. It was felt there are a fair amount who do not know this type of help exists.

The next meeting date of the Commission will be Tuesday, May 21, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. A motion was made by Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Erickson and passed to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janell Sommers
Administrative Assistant